



United States Government Printing Office  
Washington, DC 20401

June 21, 1995

Mr. Carl Malamud  
President  
Internet Multicasting Service  
1155 The National Press Building  
Washington, DC 20045

Dear Mr. Malamud:

As you may recall, I spoke with you several months ago about activities under your subscription to the *Congressional Record* online via GPO Access. At that time your Internet Protocol (IP) address was showing an extremely heavy pattern of file downloads, and our technical staff believed that it might be a server supporting multiple workstations in violation of our subscription agreement. You stated that the IP address was not assigned to a server, but that you were using an internally developed WAIS client that was extracting the entire set of *Congressional Record* files each day.

I recently received a report that your IP address (192.101.98.5) is sending multiple improper requests for documents to the *Congressional Record* database. I have been advised that your method of obtaining data is adversely affecting the performance of the WAIS server and slowing the indexing of our databases, as well as causing an extremely large number of error messages to appear in our log file.

I have personally reviewed a small sample of the data from log file for June 4, 1995. The sample is approximately 360,000 bytes (109 ASCII text pages) and it covers only 68 seconds of your attempts to obtain data from the *Congressional Record* database that day. An example of the improper requests from your internally developed WAIS client during just one second is: "/diska/wais/data/1995\_record/cr01jn95.dat.nog". According to the log file this request was repeated four times in one second. During the same second, similar requests for cr00jn95.dat.nog and cr02jn95.dat.nog were submitted five times each. This pattern was repeated many, many times over a number of days, so frequently that the log file for the week ending June 2, 1995, was approximately a gigabyte. Over 90% of that file represented access errors by your IP address.

On Monday, June 5, 1995, I called to inform you of this problem. You were unavailable, but I spoke with Brad Burdick of your staff. He was aware that you were receiving error messages from our server, although he did not seem to realize the extent of the problem. He agreed to take immediate action to suspend the requests that were generating the error messages.

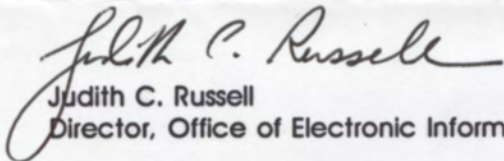


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The GPO Access service is intended for research and reference purposes only. It supports searches resulting in the identification and retrieval of individual documents. The service is not intended for wholesale or systematic downloading. It was not designed to support, nor priced to recover the costs of, such activities. GPO is amending the online subscription agreement to clarify this issue. You may continue your subscription using the service in an appropriate manner or cancel your subscription and obtain a pro rata refund of your subscription fee. If you wish to cancel your subscription, notice should be sent in writing to the GPO Access User Support Team, Mail Stop SDE, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20401. In the meantime, I assume that you will take the necessary steps to assure that this type of problem does not recur.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Judith C. Russell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Judith C. Russell

Director, Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services

CC: D. Spalding, Office of the General Counsel  
W.P. Kelley, Superintendent of Documents